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EEO Spotlight

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Chairman Campbell (right) joins the staff of the Office of the Federal Women's Program to congratulate Warren Tilghman (second left) and Richard Shakman (third left) on their award for outstanding support to the FWP Office. Mr. Shakman is the Assistant Commissioner for Administration at the Patent & Trade Mark Office, Department of Commerce, and Mr. Tilghman is Special Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Administration at P & TMO.

CSC Chairman Speaks at FWP Seminar

"Affirmative action is not exception to merit. It is merit." Alan K. Campbell, Chairman of the US Civil Service Commission, told over 800 Federal Women's Program Coordinators and Equal Employment Opportunity Specialists at the national Federal Women's Program Seminar. The seminar, held in Washington, DC on July 13, 1977, was the first national training seminar for FWPC's and preceded the Federally Employed Women (FEW) Training Conference held July 14-16.

Chairman Campbell, the luncheon speaker, stressed the interdependence of affirmative action and merit. He stated, "I am thoroughly convinced that affirmative action and merit are complementary of each other . . . To assume . . . that merit principles must be compromised in order to accomplish affirmative action is wrong—one hundred percent wrong." He attributed misconceptions to the fact that merit is sometimes confused with "the trappings of merit." "Certain current practices, regulations, and laws, which in fact comprise the structure of our merit system are sometimes the very ones which simultaneously inhibit the accomplishment of affirmative action goals," the chairman said. A cursory examination of work force data could lead one to think that women, blacks and Hispanics are well represented, but a closer look reveals that they are heavily concentrated in the lowest paying jobs.

Chairman Campbell went on to identify current personnel practices which contribute to underrepresentation of women and minorities: veterans' preference, departmental and agency promotion systems, limitations on how rapidly a person may be promoted, and apportionment requirements. He stated, "I do not favor abolishing . . . compensation for wartime veterans. I do think, however, that the time has come for this subject to be debated thoroughly. A key element of the discussion, in my view, should deal with whether veterans' preference should be limited to a one-time application for each veteran, or to a specific period of time following discharge, or to hiring decisions only (as opposed to retention rights in reduction-in-force). . . The Civil Service Commission finds itself as both the guardian of the merit system and the watchdog of veterans' preference. We shall play both roles until directed by legislation to do otherwise. We recognize, however, that the legal obligation for affirmative action contained in the Equal Employment Opportunity Act is as fully binding on the Commission as are the provisions of any other legislation."

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Fed. Pers. Mgmt. Under Study

Equal Employment Opportunity is one of the nine major Federal personnel areas under intensive reorganization study.

Civil Service Commission Chairman Alan K. Campbell and Office of Management and Budget Director Bert Lance recently announced the plan of action for the President's efforts at reorganization of personnel management in the Federal Government. The plan is called the Federal Personnel Management Project and is directed jointly by Chairman Campbell and Associate Director of the OMB, Wayne Grandquist.

Executive Director of the project is Dwight Ink, a veteran Federal official, who, with a small staff, will coordinate the efforts of nine task forces which have been established to review major elements of the Government's personnel management system. The objectives of the

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Upward Mobility at Work in Keyport

Potential is the bellwether for employees at the Naval Torpedo Station (NTS) at Keyport, Washington. Since 1974, some 35 employees have been selected for the upward mobility program. NTS has approximately 2500 employees including several at distant work sites in Washington, D.C., Hawaii, Nevada, California, Ohio, Rhode Island and Canada.

To qualify for upward mobility positions, NTS employees need not have specific experience for an upward mobility vacancy. But, they must have an overall background to clearly indicate that they have the potential after a training period to successfully perform the tasks of the target position. Applicants must be at the GS-9 level or below or an equivalent level in trades and crafts positions.

The upward mobility program at NTS provides a means for employees with under-developed potential to move into careers where their latent talents and capabilities can be fully used. Top management commitment is evident. All departments at NTS identify as upward mobility positions not less than five percent of anticipated vacancies at levels within the WG-5 through WG-9 and GS-5 through GS-9 ranges each year.

Candidates for upward mobility vacancies submit narrative applications which address specific elements or tasks of the position as shown in the upward mobility vacancy announcement. A four-member review panel made up of an Equal Employment Opportunity Office representative, a Civilian Personnel Staffing Specialist and two line managers from the hiring department evaluate the applications and rank candidates according to potential. Selection is made by the head of the department concerned.

Upward mobility trainees at NTS have individual training plans tailored to provide the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to successfully perform in the target position. Training is a combination of formal and on-the-job training. The length of the training period is based on the participant's skills and knowledge at the onset of the program with a limit of six months minimum and a two year maximum. Career counseling is provided by upward mobility coordinators and by the civilian personnel training division.

Participants' progess is monitored by supervisors, department upward mobility program coordinators, and by the NTS Upward Mobility Coordinator Sig Larson of the Civilian Personnel Training and Employee Development Division. The Equal Employment Opportunity Committee at NTS monitors the progress of the overall program.

Using a standard set of questions, a recent interview phase of program monitoring showed that participants had a positive outlook on the program, would recommend the program to others, and suggested no changes in specific program phases. The interviews also revealed some general program suggestions, such as for departmental upward mobility orientation to include department mission, target position expectations and career opportunities above the upward mobility target levels, and relationship of workload requirement versus available on-the-job training.

Some of the upward mobility target positions at NTS are electronics mechanic helper (providing access to a career ladder for a journeyman electronics mechanic), quality assurance specialist, ordnance worker, systems accountant, equipment specialist, budget analyst, safety technician. Participants have come into the program from such dead-end positions as clerk-typists, file clerks, guards, supply clerks, etc.

There are 13 upward mobility participants now in training. Twenty-two participants have completed the program. Twenty-four percent of the program participants are men and 76 percent are women.

Coordinator Sig Larson states, "All the Upward Mobility Program employees I've talked with seem to appreciate the opportunity they have and are working hard to make the most of it. My role in the program is to provide guidance on coordination of the training plan and help ensure that everyone concerned is familiar with the program requirements. I can also suggest training alternatives to suit individual needs and training plans. Working with upward mobility employees is a real pleasure. It's exciting to see people work toward non-traditional roles as career objectives."

For more information on NTS's Upward Mobility Program contact Civilian Personnel Office, Naval Torpedo Station, Keyport, Training and Employee Development Division, Keyport, Washington 98345. Information for this article was supplied by Sig Larson and by Don Hein, NTS's "Keynotes" newspaper editor.

Gina Weatherford is working to become an electronics mechanic helper.

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Editor: Ed Shell
The Chairman of the U.S. Civil Service Commission has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of public business required by law of this agency. Use of funds for printing of this periodical has been approved by the Director, Office of Management and Budget through March 31, 1980.

CEP at CSC

Following a lengthy developmental period, this fiscal year the Civil Service Commission launched its new internal Career Enhancement Program (CEP). CEP provides opportunities for clerical and wage grade employees to be considered for positions in technician career ladders. The grade range is normally GS-4 through 7.

CSC employes in the clerical and wage grade areas need not meet qualification standards normally required for technician positions to be considered for CEP positions, which are filled by using the competitive procedure of the CSC's merit promotion program. All employees within the designated area of consideration may apply, provided they have worked for the Commission for at least one year and are in grades GS-4 or above or wage grade equivalent.

CEP provides the CSC a means to select individuals who are best qualified and show the most potential to perform in specific positions. It opens new career paths to employees by providing maximum consideration for a broad range of occupational fields. It provides maximum information about job opportunities to allow employees to make more intelligent decisions about applying for career opportunities in this agency. The program is under a nationwide Civil Service Commission Training Agreement.

The special examining instruments used for CEP are designed to predict an employee's potential for performing in the position described in the announcement. These examining instruments are based on the Job Element Examining method. This method calls for an analysis of the skills, knowledges and abilities, and personal characteristics needed to perform successfully in a position, and the development of a series of related examining instruments designed to measure the potential of candidates to perform the work. Employees do not have to possess specialized education or experience in order to do well on the examination which measures their potential to perform the kind of work required on the job. The series of examining instruments are tailored for particular kinds of vacancies in each program area of the Commission's work. They include written questions, structured interviews, special performance evaluations or simulated work exercises.

Job Element Examining focuses on entry and full performance requirements and identifies two sets of requirements: 1) immediate knowledges, skills, abilities and personal characteristics of the entry level; and 2) long-range potential to acquire knowledges, skills and abilities and personal characteristics of the full-performance level. A major difference between this and other procedures is that it centers on characteristics of successful workers.

Three employees have so far been selected for CEP positions as staffing technicians, the first occupation to be covered under CEP. Toni Olgeaty and Dee Guido were GS-6 secretary-stenos and Shirley Sparkman was a personnel clerk GS-4. These employees receive on-the-job training and formal courses in the field of personnel with special emphasis on staffing and placement. Upon successful completion of training at the end of one year, the participants will be placed in staffing assistant positions. Their reaction to the program is a positive one. They concurred that the CEP program has provided them access into the mainstream of a career ladder which otherwise they would never have been able to enter.

One of the participants, Toni Olgeaty, is relocating to St. Louis, Missouri soon. She was concerned that she would have to drop out of the program, but was elated to learn that with minor program alterations, she is assured of continuation in the CEP program at the CSC regional office.

Olgeaty

Sparkman

Guido

The next occupation to be covered under the CEP program is a new claims technician category. The Job Element Examining Method is currently being applied to the category but will soon be completed and will become a CEP position.

For more information on the CSC's internal Career Enhancement program, contact Bob Gatewood, CEP Coordinator, CSC, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 3H15, Washington, D.C. 20415.

Chairman Campbell added, "Promotion systems are key to any merit system, and when 80 percent of all personnel actions are done within the system and when the pool from which the people are drawn for promotion contains very small numbers of women and minorities, the system is clearly not self-corrective. Further, when the law prevents promotion of more than one grade per year, talent is lost, whether that talent is white, black, or Hispanic: male or female; young or old."

These issues and more are now under study by the Federal Personnel Management Project. The Chairman promised that each of the nine task forces, not only the one on equal opportunity and affirmative action, will consider the ways in which their recommendations affect equal opportunity.

The CSC Chairman encouraged Federal agencies to undertake innovative programs of their own, saying that the CSC is taking steps to improve its own internal picture. "The Civil Service Commission has more women and minorities than the Government-wide average, yet their representation at GS-16 through 18 levels is very low . . . the Commission believes that experience in agencies other than the Commission should be taken into account in the recruitment for executive level jobs. For this reason, we have adopted new measures which we believe will increase the numbers of women, minorities, and non-CSC personnel appointed to key positions at GS-15 and above, both in Washington and in the field. This effort may include the creation of a new executive development program, which would afford the opportunity for one to three years of training as assistants to directors of bureaus and regions."

Chairman Campbell closed by reiterating that "We are not talking about special benefits, but the elimination of them. Jobs are not to be obtained by bending or twisting the rules, but by making the rules contribute to a system truly based on talent."

ADEA Coverage From 40-70

Recent amendments to Part 713 of Civil Service Commission regulations change the scope of coverage of regulations which implement section 15 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA).

Federal Personnel Manual Letter 713-39 transmits a copy of the amendments and provides guidance to comply with a recent court decision that ". . . Federal employees between the ages of 65 and 70 are protected from age discrimination by the ADEA." The coverage expands upon the protected age group from employees or applicants who are at least 40 years of age and less than 65 years of age to (a) employees who are at least 40 years of age and less than 70 years of age and (b) applicants who are at least 40 years of age and less than 65 years of age.

The amendments do not apply to employment situations involving mandatory retirement between 65 and 70. The court decision stated that it did not deal with employees ". . . who, because of other statutes or regulations, are subject to mandatory retirement at an age earlier than 70 . . ."

Federal employees age 65 to less than 70 who apply for jobs in their own or other Federal agencies are "employees" and not "applicants" for purposes of coverage and entitlements under the ADEA, Part 713, and related regulations and instructions.

The effective date of the amendments is March 4, 1977. The FPM Letter provides further specific instructions, particularly concerning impact of the effective date on the complaints process.

Contact your personnel or Equal Employment Opportunity Office to review the FPM Letter.

project are to examine present Federal personnel policies, processes, and organization to determine what improvements are required; and to recommend appropriate legislation, regulations, processes, and organizational solutions.

The task force on Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action is headed by Dr. Harriett Jenkins, Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. With a staff of some eight persons, the task force will review and coordinate the activities of each task force insofar as they relate to equal employment and affirmative action considerations.

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